

The Appropriateness of Violence: The Non-Rational Logic of Terrorism

Honors Research Thesis

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation *with honors research distinction* in Political Science in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University

by

Kevin Kulig

The Ohio State University

June 2012

Project Advisor: Professor Jennifer Mitzen, Department of Political Science

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Kevin Kulig

The goal of this essay is to introduce the logic of appropriateness to the strategic model that dominates terrorism studies and show how the former versus the latter can more accurately model terrorists' decision making process. The strategic model overlooks the potential descriptive and explanatory power of normative and cultural, i.e. "non-rational" factors by virtue of its assumption of rationality. Moreover, the model has seen little empirical testing, and when it has, it fails to sufficiently explain terrorism (Abrahms 2012, 2006). This paper imports an alternative model for terrorism, building off the logic of appropriateness from international relations theory, in an attempt to capture the logic underlying the basic, fundamental motivations of terrorists. Applying this model best describes the terrorists' *initial* decision to use violence, but the logic of consequence best describes how the terrorists carry out violence action. I conclude by noting the increased explanatory potential for theories of terrorism when both logics are included and with discussing new research directions based on my findings.

The goal of the paper is to raise the question "Where do norms, culture, and identity of terrorists fit into their decision to use terrorism?" This paper means to see how applicable the logic of appropriateness is to a particular "moment" of this phenomenon, not to fully explain how terrorism comes to be. What follows suggests that 1.) the logic of consequence ill fits the entire logic of the terrorists, 2.) the logic of appropriateness better fits a part of their logic, and 3.) the two logics together form the basis for explaining why, how, when, where, and against whom terrorism occurs. The logic of appropriateness determines the extent to which terrorists follow

the logic of consequence. It establishes a "general outline" of action, and the logic of consequence fills in the details, so to speak.¹

In order to test for the presence or absence of the logic of appropriateness, I examine terrorists' statements, loosely defined as any communication or message from a terrorist or terrorist group intended for an external audience. These statements come in a variety of forms, such as declarations, videos, books, and even court testimony. And on this point, I introduce my other goal, perhaps more normative than strictly analytical: we should give terrorism back to the terrorists. To clarify this: If the meaning and definition we ascribe to it were purely meant to be an abstract, analytically useful concept for scholarship and policy, I would have no problem. However, when we define and explain terrorism according to our unknown or known biases for political, cultural, or personal purposes, we analyze *our* terrorism, not the terrorism of the terrorists. To do this, we must take what terrorists say about their terrorism *seriously* by viewing it in light of their culture, norms, and language, and not automatically assuming that they do not mean or believe what they say. The problem is when we instead impose on analyses and theories our assumed views of how we believe *all* people function without checking to see if they actually help in explaining or describing terrorism.

The paper is structured into eight sections. Section I describes the logic of consequence, as it is used in theories of terrorism, and the logic of appropriateness, as it may apply to terrorism. Section II critiques two prominent theories of terrorism which use the strategic model

¹¹ An illustration would do well here to explain: Suppose a person of a certain culture makes a libation on joyous occasions. As the description stands, it is fairly vague, leaving open various questions such as what liquids are acceptable for a libation, where and when must it be made, what should be worn during the libation, etc. To the extent that these are left open, the person making the libation decides the answers to these and so is able to act on the logic of consequences for these specifics so as to avoid unnecessary inconveniences. Depending on their wealth, they may use cheap liquids if poor and more expensive ones if rich. They may perform it in convenient locations and at convenient times. If the rules were more detailed, specifying a certain type of wine made only from certain grapes, or specifying that the libation must be poured at precisely a certain time, then it has fewer details for the logic of consequences to fill in, since the logic of appropriateness has already done so.

to illustrate how their assumptions affect their analyses and then briefly looks at two theories which feature a more structural explanation of terrorism, but do not exactly apply the logic of appropriateness. Section III discusses the definition of terrorism I use and describes the selection criteria for my cases. The next four sections (IV-VII) are the cases themselves: al-Qā'idah, the 7/7/2004 London subway bombers, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI), and Revolutionary Organization 17 November (17N). Each case will examine statements from each group for evidence indicating the logic of appropriateness and ends with a visual summary of the analysis. The final section, VIII, summarizes the findings of the cases and discusses future research avenues.

I. The Two Different Logics of Action

The strategic (Abrahms 2008) or instrumental (Crenshaw 1988) model of terrorism has enjoyed immense popularity among academics and policy makers alike. This model, based on the more general model of rational actors, is predicated on three main assumptions: “(1) terrorists are motivated by relatively stable and consistent political preferences; (2) terrorists evaluate the expected political payoffs of their available options, or at least the most obvious ones; and (3) terrorism is adopted when the expected political return is superior to those of alternative options” (Abrahms 2008, p. 79). It assumes that terrorists follow the “logic of consequence”: terrorist understand the effectiveness of their methods vis-à-vis other methods for achieving their political goals, and are expected to abandon them when alternative methods become more effective (ibid., p. 81). However, this model has seen limited empirical testing, and so has not actually been validated (ibid., p. 79).²

Actors following the logic of appropriateness, alternatively, “maintain a repertoire of roles and identities, each providing rules of appropriate behavior in situations for which they are

relevant” (March and Olsen 2006, p. 690). For this logic, actors match their situations and identities to the appropriate rules and norms, rather than calculate potential probabilities and payoffs, in order to determine their actions (ibid.). These rules and norms are “institutionalized practices of a collectivity, based on mutual, and often tacit understandings of what is true, reasonable, natural, right, and good” (ibid.), transmitted through social networks, and can change through new experiences and social contact (ibid., p. 697). Actors will ask themselves “What kind of situation is this? What kind of a person am I? What does a person such as I do in a situation such as this?” (ibid., p. 690).

Terrorists adhering to this logic would be motivated by their situations and identities and act according to the rules their situations and identities prescribe. We should expect to see the reasoning for terrorist attacks be based on matching those elements together and ascertaining the similarity between established rules, identities, and norms to current situations, not calculations about the effectiveness of those attacks in furthering material or political goals. Their fundamental, basic motivations and reasons cannot be reduced to political preferences and payoffs. Their identities, or how they view their identities in their situations, instead constitute their most basic motivations. For them, violence is not merely a strategic tactic for achieving material/political goals, but a self-evident, inevitable action, intrinsic to their situation. Though it may seem strange to call violence a norm, “rules of appropriateness underlie atrocities of action [...] The fact that a rule of action is defined as appropriate [...] does not guarantee technical efficiency or moral acceptability” (ibid.). Additionally, we should not automatically presume that their violence is a calculated action to maximize political or material payoffs.

² There exist some tests of this model, namely *Dying to Win* and *Cutting the Fuse* (Pape 2005, and Feldman 2010) and *Dying to Kill* (Bloom 2005), but these studies have only focused on suicide terrorism. Further, their conclusions are contested and contradict each other.

If terrorists do follow the logic of appropriateness instead of the logic of consequences, we should find evidence of this in their statements, which expound their reasons, grievances, intentions, and motivations for their actions. Generally speaking, their statements should show: 1.) references to or acknowledgement of their identity, situation, and rules 2.) a process of matching these together, or more loosely, some type of interplay between some or all of these elements 3.) a cognitive framework or culturally/normatively based structure in which all these elements are situated and matched together, and finally 4.) language of necessity with regard to their actions, such that their actions *had* to happen, or, that those actions are integral, constitutive features of their identity, situation, and rules. Indeed, the examination of their statements bears out that these guidelines roughly capture the content of terrorist statements.

II. Critique of the Strategic Model

Kydd and Walter's "The Strategies of Terrorism" (2006) is an application of costly signaling from game theory to terrorism.³ They define terrorism as "the use of violence against civilians by non-state actors to attain political goals" (p. 52). Terrorism operates according to five costly signaling strategies: attrition, intimidation, provocation, spoiling, and outbidding. They note that terrorism has also had five relatively stable goals over time: regime change, territorial change, policy change, social control, and status quo maintenance. Regime change is simply the overthrow of a government, territorial change is the transfer of land from one country to another (including the establishment of a new country on that territory), policy change are lesser political demands, like supporting or not supporting a country, social control seeks to constrain behavior of individuals, and status quo maintenance supports an existing regime against internal or external challengers. A terrorist organization need not be limited to only holding one goal.

Costly signaling, they contend, is a method of reducing uncertainty and of statements pertaining to power, resolve, and trustworthiness between two parties who expect each other to be mutually dishonest. Talk alone is cheap, and so liars can easily use it. Consequently, for communication to be taken seriously, a cost must be paid which liars or bluffers would be unwilling or unable to make. Because terrorists need to provide credible information to their audiences (including states, foreign populations, and domestic populations), they cannot use cheap talk. When terrorists attempt to credibly convey the topics of uncertainty (power, resolve, trustworthiness) to the recipient(s) (enemy, domestic population), they use the five aforementioned costly signaling strategies.

Before outlining the specific strategies below, I will point out the assumptions of the strategic model which are apparent in how they set up their theory. Stable goals may be read as analogous to motivations or possibly even identity and/or rules, though this is a rough analogy. Actors are motivated by their goals or the maximal achievement of their goals (i.e. "highest payoff"). These goals have a material (or, political) basis as well, meaning that they can be traced back to territory, policy, or behaviors and so may be said to deal with inherently negotiable matters. These political goals are assumed to be understood by the target too. By extension, if terrorists' goals are not (or non-) negotiable, then the strategic model is of dubious application. Once the target infers that the message sent is credible and not cheap talk, then the terrorists will cease to use costly signaling. Likewise, according to the underlying assumptions, they will cease to use violence for costly signaling, or costly signaling altogether, when other strategies supersede it, or when it is ineffective (e.g., the target does not understand that the terrorists are communicating a specific message). Their preferences though, not actions, are fixed, the latter of which may be highly fluid depending on how the conditions and their calculations change.

³ In my summary of their argument, I do not include the counterterrorism strategies they propose.

Notice the difference with the logic of appropriateness, which would stipulate that the actions are fixed once situation, identity, and rules have been matched. Those latter elements can be fluid and dynamic at least until the actor is reasonably sure of a suitable match between them.

On another point, this theory assumes that terrorists desire to communicate through violence resolve, power, or trustworthiness in hopes that it changes their target's behavior. This entails three further assumptions: 1.) terrorists' primary goal is to influence behavior, 2.) the purpose of their violence is to communicate information about their status, capabilities, or features, and 3.) their "verbal statements are often not credible" (p. 57). We must ignore other possible purposes for their violence and throw out what they say solely on the assumption that their "real" and credible communication is their violence.

I have summarized and broken down the authors' costly signaling strategies (taken from pp. 59-78) in Table 1 below to explicate how they follow the assumptions of the strategic model:

Table 1: Summary of "The Strategies of Terrorism"

| Costly Signaling Strategy | Elements of the Strategic Model | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Stable Preferences | | Highest Payoff Conditions |
| | Target Audience | Terrorist Group | |
| Attrition: Convince target of their superior power and unyielding resolve | Minimize future costs of continuing conflict | Territorial change | Target government cannot retaliate with proper force and have little interest in the conflict, target has past behavior of giving concessions when under pressure. |
| Intimidation: Demonstrate that terrorists can punish those who disobey and that the state cannot stop them | Support the actor who is less costly to support | Social control, regime change | Weak state, rough terrain. |
| Provocation: Persuade domestic audience that target of attacks is evil and must be resisted | Resist evil governments and support those who fight against them | Regime change, territorial change | Target government retaliates brutally and/or indiscriminately, audience can influence target government's behavior |
| Spoiling: Persuades target government that moderates from | Avoid negotiating with extremists/untrustworthy parties | Territorial change, achieving best | Lack of self-policing of terrorist group, peace negotiations |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| terrorist group cannot be trusted | | possible concessions | |
| Outbidding: Persuade domestic audience that terrorist group best supports audience's interests by carrying out increased/more destructive attacks | Support group which will achieve best possible concessions despite high costs, avoid supporting sellout groups | Achieve best possible concessions, diminish influence of sellout groups | Multiple groups competing for domestic audience's support, uncertainty among domestic audience about terrorist groups' and foreign adversary's trustworthiness |

The greatest problems this theory runs into is that terrorist groups consistently and frequently commit violent acts, both of which contradict the core assumptions of the theory. If violent acts are meant to be costly, then they should not happen frequently due to their high costs. And if terroristic violence is ineffective at achieving concessions, terrorists should not be using it consistently. The rational model's assumptions do not allow for this theoretical model to accurately explain observable reality, and in fact the observations contradict the results we would expect from this model. True, the model can make additional assumptions to explain this behavior, for example, that terrorists are highly cost tolerant/immune. In that case, why even posit that terrorism is *costly* signaling if the terrorists do not value their methods as being costly? Attempts to harmonize observations with theory involve adding these sorts of undermining assumptions. If the observations support that the terrorists consistently fulfill obey certain rules in certain situations when they have a certain identity, then the logic of appropriateness would fit much easier than the logic of consequence with *ad hoc* or contradictory assumptions. I am not saying that the logic of appropriateness would specifically solve this problem, only that if the assumptions of rationality are proving problematic and inconsistent with their observable implications, then different ones may be needed.

By excluding norms and culture, the onus of explanation and description falls on the assumptions of rationality. Norms and culture, however, capture a part of the phenomenon that

the rational model, by virtue of its assumptions, cannot. For example, it can show for the outbidding strategy that these groups are not competing at all, but just acting out certain roles. In the latter case, the costly signaling theory would, at best, fail to give any "real" insights into the causes of terrorism, and at worst, prescribe disastrous policy actions which exacerbate the situation even more. A theory which assumes non-rationality and a logic of appropriateness, however, would be able to explain how these roles come about and relate to each other, and offer policy recommendations aimed at changing the roles of certain actors or possibly altering how the actors perceive those roles so that violence does not come about. Those normative and cultural aspects, however, are not even considered under the rational model, despite that they may in fact offer grounds for better theory and policy recommendations.

Robert Pape's theory, developed in *Dying to Win* (2005) and *Cutting the Fuse* (and Feldman 2010), develops a theory of suicide terrorism and sketches the logics behind it. He defines terrorism as "the use of violence by an organization other than a national government to intimidate or frighten a target audience [...] [and] has two broad purposes: to gain supporters and to coerce opponents" (2005, p. 3). Terrorism follows a strategic logic, best summarized with Pape's own words:

At its core, suicide terrorism is a strategy of coercion, a means to compel a target government to change policy. The central logic of this strategy is simple: suicide terrorism attempts to inflict enough pain on the opposing society to overwhelm its interest in resisting the terrorists' demands, and so to induce the government to concede, or the population to revolt against the government. The common feature of all suicide terrorist campaigns is that they inflict punishment on the opposing society, either directly by killing civilians or indirectly by killing military personnel in circumstances that cannot lead to meaningful battlefield victory. As we shall see, suicide terrorism is rarely a onetime event, but often occurs in a series of suicide attacks. It generates coercive leverage both from the immediate panic associated with each attack and from the risk of punishment of innocents in the future (pp. 19-20).

Further, there is a specific logic of coercion followed by weak actors. Normally, coercion is used by stronger actors against weaker ones, but in the case of terrorism this order is reversed. States would use two types of coercive strategies: punishment and denial. Denial requires significantly greater military capabilities than terrorists possess, and so punishment is the only option. Suicide terrorism, by imposing costs on civilians and the military and threatening future costs, thus follows the same logic used by states (cf. WWII bombings of Dresden, 1972 bombing in Vietnam, and the first Gulf War).

The ultimate goal and consistent motivator for suicide bombing, in nearly all instances, is the liberation of militarily occupied territory and freedom for the terrorists' homeland is the common and consistent motivator for carrying out suicide terrorism. Their policy goals are actually in line with moderate nationalists' goals, they simply differ on how they see the effectiveness of violence vis-à-vis other methods, especially against democracies. And so, after Pape examines the success record of Hamas and Hezbollah, he concludes that indeed suicide terrorism scores some victories, albeit "modest or very limited goals, [and] so far [suicide terrorism] fail[s] to compel target democracies to abandon goals central to national wealth or security" (ibid., p. 12).

Pape's argument, resting on the stability of terrorists' goals and their picking the optimal strategy, relies heavily on the rational model. The goals that inspire suicide terrorism are both highly stable and highly political (material): suicide terrorists wish to end a military occupation of a territory in their homeland. Viewing the terrorists' goal this way, though, obfuscates potential normative factors motivating their actions. Just because the material reflection of these notions takes the form of ending a military occupation does not mean that the military occupation itself is the actual motivator. This material reflection may be useful as a proxy, but it

cannot tell us much about what, if any, cultural and normative influences underlie it. Granted, in the case that there is a 1:1 correspondence between the material and the ideational, then understanding the norms behind the material is unnecessary. However, it is precisely my point here that the rational model heavily disincentivizes, or even forbids, examining those immaterial factors. Peering beyond the material into the ideas and non-rational structures can reveal patterns lying beneath it, giving rise to more generalizable and explanatory theories. Alternatively, we may look and see that the specific combinations of identity, situation, and rules bear no influence, i.e., the normative/culture explanations are idiosyncratic and patternless, and territorial occupation by a foreign power is indeed the only shared pattern. We cannot say anything on this matter, though, until we make an effort to discern any patterns, or lack thereof, and understand which ones lead to which material reflections.

He also greatly stresses that suicide terrorism is the most optimal choice from the perspective of the terrorists, but in doing so he makes a circular argument. Suicide terrorism achieves limited concessions against democracies, but not limited enough for it to be a failure. His theory fulfills the requirement of weighing other choices by then arguing that terrorists recognize suicide terrorism is better suited than guerrilla or insurgent tactics when facing democracies. Problematically, there is a lack of evidence for comparison of the suicide terrorism strategy to other violent strategies, let alone non-violent ones. This is exemplified by the theory's circular reasoning: Suicide terrorists use suicide terrorism because it works best, and if it didn't work best they'd used other methods, ergo it works best. Simplified more, suicide terrorism works best because other methods don't, and other methods don't work best because suicide terrorism does. I do not mean to set up a straw man of his argument, but because he selects cases on the dependent variable only (Ashworth et al. 2008, p. 273), it is possible to construct his

argument as such. This circular reasoning leads me to suspect that non-rational logics are operating under the hood, as it were, leading to a logical fallacy when a strictly rational model is applied to it. If the suicide terrorists choose suicidal violence because they have deemed it appropriate based on their situation, identity, and rules, then a circular argument does not arise. However, that method of determining action is not in accord with the rational model, and so it cannot be used.

The analysis of these two rational/strategic model theories demonstrate a few pitfalls of purely assuming a logic of consequence among terrorists and tentatively suggests how the logic of appropriateness may avoid them. Perhaps the most glaring problem are their internal failings and inconsistencies. Kydd and Walter's costly signaling theory lacks a reconciliation between the low costs terrorists seem to pay for their signals due to their frequency and the high costs necessary for these signals to be costly and also between the consistency of their actions and those actions' apparent ineffectiveness at persuading the target or credibly communicating information. Pape's foreign occupation theory of suicide terrorism relies on circular reasoning for the effectiveness of suicide terrorism. These alone do not warrant a rejection of the rational model, but nonetheless they are potential indications that its assumptions are fundamentally flawed, since the explanations resting on them fail to correspond to our observations and data. The added value of the logic of appropriateness for theories becomes greater when, in addition to potentially avoiding observational and logical inconsistencies, it can reveal generalizable patterns of thought, based on normative and cultural values, leading to terroristic violence obscured by their material manifestations. For a hypothetical example, suicide terrorism specifically happen when actors weigh the situation more heavily than identity or rules in the matching process, or perhaps they start thinking of their situation first then link it to their identity

and rules, etc. But because this mode of determining action is non-rational, the logic of consequence cannot broach these types of explanations, and may thus fail to uncover better explanations. Both theories examined exclusively privileged the material situation because their assumptions focus on tangible payoffs.

Other critiques of theories based on the rational/strategic model have pointed out further, more detailed inconsistencies with the data. The coercive effects of terrorism have been largely ineffective, and "research fails to identify a single terrorist organization that has achieved its political platform by attacking civilians" (Abrahms 2008, p. 83) and those that have been successful were guerrilla campaigns directed at military targets, not civilian ones (*ibid.*). If the terrorists were rational actors, they would have stopped using this method. Another point indicating a problem with the coercive logic of terrorism is that many terrorist groups rarely claim responsibility for an attack. These anonymous attacks, and the failure to issue a demand associated with them, goes against the coercive logic of terrorism (*ibid.*, pp. 89-90). If no demand is associated with the violence, it does not qualify as coercion. Another critique is that terrorism is a first, not last, resort. However, terrorists have political options available and attack societies which have the greatest number of these alternatives available (*ibid.*, p. 84). Of course, this in itself does not violate the evaluation of available methods requirement of the rational model, for it leaves open the possibility that terrorists have examined other methods but chose terrorism. But, it without a study that includes evidence of such evaluation this argument still holds. Related to the last point, terrorists rarely, if ever, compromise, despite that doing so would satisfy a large portion of the demands (*ibid.*, p. 86) and that issues are almost always divisible given their complexity and the ability to make side payments (*ibid.*, p. 87). That they seem to

ignore or refuse political options in favor of violence weakens the applicability of the rational model.

The final two points criticize terrorism's fulfillment of the stable and consistent goals requirement. The political platforms of terrorist groups often vacillate wildly, leading to no consistently cited reason for carrying out attacks. The ETA switched from fighting the Franco dictatorship to the new democratic government and the PKK changes its stance from advocating a homeland governed by Islamic, Marxist, or neither (ibid., pp. 181-182). Finally, the fratricidal nature of some terrorist organizations' attacks (ibid., pp. 90-91) confuses the true nature of their goals. That is, it questions whether they are fighting a political fight against a foreign enemy or if they are simply fighting for supremacy among their own community.⁴

These additional criticisms underscore lack of empirical correspondence for explanations using strategic model, bolstering the suggestion that its assumptions are flawed for characterizing terrorists' actions. Again though, these criticisms by themselves do not immediately suggest that the logic of appropriateness fits better. However, I believe Pape in his own theory unintentionally raises the possibility of the logic of appropriateness when he states that suicide terrorists wish to “punish” their targets. He of course does not intend its deterrence/coercion meaning, but this word also unavoidably evokes normative connotations, e.g. someone *must* be punished because they did something *bad*, or someone *must* be punished for the sake of *justice*. Punishment can occur because it is appropriate and not because it leads to higher future payoffs. Certainly there are other parts of the logic of appropriateness still missing, but it importantly hints at the existence of this logic despite assumptions to the contrary.

⁴ For the sake of fairness, I will point out that these critiques themselves have been critiqued. See, "Correspondence: What Makes Terrorists Tick" *International Security*, Vol. 33, No. 4 (Spring 2009).

Of special, but brief, mention are the theories of terrorism which have opted for "non-rational," normative-cultural explanations. In "Market Civilization and its Clash with Terror" (Mousseau 2002/2003), the author points out that terrorism most commonly occurs in societies with clientalist economies when they come into contact with the capitalistic mores of Western societies. Capitalist economies stress the individual and the use of contracts to enforce economic exchange and legal matters, replacing the function of and thus clashing with the strong societal bonds among small groups. The breakdown of clientalist linkages leads to chaos in society as it transitions to a capitalist economy. Terrorism arises when in-groups fight to preserve the clientalist ways, viewing all out-groups as outsiders or enemies, and thus making them valid targets for violence. Another study, "Behind the Curve: Globalization and International Terrorism" (Kurth Cronin 2002/2003) names globalization as a major factor in the rise of terrorism. When Western values threaten to replace deeply held values in non-Western societies, terrorism surfaces to assert a counter identity and fight against the cultural homogeneity of globalization. Finally, in "Terror as Transnational Advocacy" (Asal et al. 2007), the authors highlight the similarities between terrorist groups and transnational advocacy networks. Terrorist organizations very often use many non-violent methods, such as issue linking, symbolic politics, and establishing information networks, which TANs also employ. The difference is that terrorist groups use violence as well. Their study crucially connects terrorists organizations to non-violent social movements, the common link being that both wish to change normative values. Lastly, "Terrorism, Signaling, and Suicide Attack" (Hoffman and McCormick 2004) has applied the logic of appropriateness to terrorism, but only to explain why some individuals become suicide bombers in groups. The logic of consequence applies to the terrorist group as a "whole," by which he mainly means the leadership. In fact, the logic of appropriateness, or at least the social

norms associated with it, seems to function as the leadership's "control mechanism" for non-elite members.

The central argument of this paper complements the above theories in some sense, but differs from them fundamentally on the level of analysis and purpose. The first two theories propose entirely structural arguments for why terrorism occurs without exploring the assumptions which form their foundation. In this way, this paper complements them by offering a (potential) basis to test them, or at least develop the micro-level effects of macro-level phenomena. In the same way, the argument here is a sort of precursor to the third article, at least insofar as TANs use symbolic politics and issue linking—it would be difficult to imagine purely rational descriptions of how those work. For the last article, my argument differs in that the logic of appropriateness applies to **all** types of terrorism, not suicide terrorism exclusively, and also to the group as a whole, not only individuals in it. I also mark the dividing line, as it were, between the two logics much differently. The leadership and regular members use both logics, not one or the other exclusively, and switch depending on the specificity of the rules of their logic of appropriateness.

III. Definitions and Selection Criteria

I will only briefly talk here about the definitions of terrorism and the one this essay adopts. The problem of defining terrorism has been discussed countless times (see, for example, Jongman and Schmid 1988 and Laqueur 1999), and indeed a definition greatly affects which groups are chosen, how they are examined, and what theories are crafted, but for my purposes, this issue is largely irrelevant. I look for disparities between what the terrorists (as so named by others) say about their motivations and what empirical research on terrorism says about them. Consequently, I select groups which have been classified as terrorist by those theories.

Terrorism, for the purposes of this essay, is defined by how others apply the term, not by any intrinsic features of the phenomenon it denotes. Though this is an imprecise way of defining a phenomenon, in light of this essay's thesis, it is appropriate. The results of my analysis will help define what "motivations" are for terrorists and suggest what role they should play in definitions and theories of terrorism—are they a *sine non qua*, a variable, or irrelevant?

I have selected statements from al-Qā'idah (issued by 'Usāmah bin Lādin), the London 7/7 bombers, Mohammed Siddique Khan and Shehzad Tanweer, the Jemaah Islamiyya (JI) (issued by Imam Samudra), and the now defunct Revolutionary Organization 17 November (17N) (issued by its former leader, Dimitri Koufodinas). These terrorists and terrorist organizations were chosen for several reasons, though chief among them was the availability of authentic statements. Statements issued by them are more readily accessible, in translation or original, than other terrorists or terrorist organizations.⁵ Further, the veracity of these statements was far more easily established due to the plethora of sources for them, such as multiple news reports from different agencies and academic articles. Ensuring the authenticity of the statements is entirely vital to the accuracy of my conclusions, for falsely ascribed statements would not reflect the true views of the terrorists and terrorist groups. Second, I chose terrorist groups whose language and/or culture I was familiar with. This was to make sure I did not overlook or ignore any cultural, linguistic, or textual nuances, and thus avoid misinterpreting their statements.

Although the above two criteria deal with factors exogenous to the features of the terrorist groups, the others deal with endogenous ones to enhance generalizability of my conclusions. I selected terrorist groups which primarily attacked civilian, rather than military,

⁵ For example, I found statements online by Shining Path (terrorist organization in Peru) and Revolutionary Nuclei (terrorist group in Greece) in Spanish and Greek, respectively, but they were left un-translated.

targets. There is a growing awareness in the terrorism literature that guerilla organizations (i.e. those that avoid attacking civilians or focus on attacking military forces) are different than those which seek to attack civilians (see Ganor 2002, Moghadam 2006, Nolan 2002, Schmid and Jongman 2005, Wilkinson 1986; from Abrahms 2012, p. 369). I also selected on geographic location, or rather, Western and non-Western organizations, functioning as a proxy for difficult-to-capture variables like culture or history, to see if it affected the motivations and professed *raison d'être* of the terrorist groups. The final selection criterion I used was the religious affiliation of the groups.

The point of these criteria is to show that the logic of appropriateness is not peculiar to or correlated with specific characteristics, but that it is relevant for all terrorists groups. Thus, I start with al-Qā'idah to show that the logic of appropriateness accurately describes the exemplar Islamic terrorist group, and then proceed to the London bombers to show that the logic is not specific to non-Western cultural factors, and then to the JI to show that non-Arab, non-Western Islamic groups use it as well, and finally I end with 17N to demonstrate that the logic of appropriateness is not specific to Islamic groups, or religious groups more generally, as it occurs in a Western, atheistic group. Despite only having four cases, the stark contrasts between the qualitative features of the groups strongly suggest that the logic of appropriateness can accurately characterize many other terrorist groups' decision processes as well.

Though it may seem odd at first to “control” my cases by letting them vary as much as possible, I must make two points for doing so. The first is that I am not developing a theory for terrorism, but only questioning the applicability of the logic of consequence to terrorist groups. Following from this, the second point is that I am looking for a constant, something that does not change or vary even if other variables do. Normally, constants are not particularly interesting

since they cannot describe a relationship between two variables. However, this constant will affect the assumptions of the strategic model, upon which many other theories are built, and if this constant shows that those assumptions do not hold, then theories which will upon it must be modified accordingly. It is a constant which affects how other variables will vary with each other.. To put this in other terms, I am looking for a shared variable among a type or class of groups, and so the sample should be representative of the entire type, not a sub-type.

IV. First Case: al-Qā'idah

al-Qā'idah, perhaps the most infamous terrorist organization, at least in the Western world, will serve as my first case. By far, 'Usāmah bin Lādin has been one of the most popular, perhaps most prolific too, al-Qā'idah member for issuing statements, manifestos, fatāwā⁶, and letters, and the statements are taken from him. It is on account of this popularity and visibility, and thus ability to articulate their statements to the widest, largest audience, that I chose communications from them. I have arranged them in chronological order to show the stability of the themes and motivations in their communications. I have attempted to select those which are specifically addressed to their targets, but have also chosen those meant for Arabs and Muslims specifically. Despite these different audiences though, their proclaimed motivations do not change.

I being with “‘ilān al-jihād ‘alā al- ‘amrīkiyīn al-muḥatīlīn li-bilād al-ḥaramayn”

[Declaration of Jihad on the Americans Occupying the Country of the Two Sanctuaries, trans.

mine],⁷ which was issued in 1996 by bin Lādin in the London based *al-Quds al-‘Arabī*. I choose

⁶ Plural of fatwā, which, generally speaking, is a non-binding ruling or opinion on an issue for Muslims, based on Islamic law and jurisprudence and issued by a religious authority, Islamic scholar, or anyone trained in Islamic law.

⁷ Alternative translations exist for this title, such as the one given by PBS which has “Declaration of War” instead of “Declaration of Jihad.” That translation, though, is quite slanted as “jihād” does not mean war. Additionally, the text explaining this declaration says that a fatwā is “a declaration of war,” which is patently false. Source:

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html

to start with this since it is the chronologically first of all the statements I include, providing a basis for comparing and evaluating the discourse of other similar statements. It is also the statement whose excerpts I have translated myself to minimize any potential biases in the pre-existing translations. This one sets the stage, so to speak.

‘Usāmah, after some Qur’anic verses, which themselves establish his identity of being a pious Muslim, begins the declaration by saying:

“It is not hidden for you what in the way of tyranny, aggression, and injustice from the alliance of the Jews, the Christians, and their agents, befell the people of Islam, to the extent that the blood of the Muslims became the cheapest blood and their money and wealth loot for the enemies. [...] The terrible pictures of the massacre in Qana in Lebanon are still stuck in the minds [of those who had seen the pictures].”⁸

He goes on to list a number of other massacres occurring elsewhere, then says:

"[That these massacres happened] is in spite of [them] having been seen and heard by the whole world, but rather, [they happened] by a clear conspiracy of America and its allies to deprive [the Muslims] weapons for the oppressed, under the pretext of the tyrannical United Nations.

In these opening words, he specifies the situation and elements of identity. For the former, he ascribes three recurring attributions to it: tyranny, aggression, and injustice. The primary feature of the situation is not just that Muslims (a major element of the identity bin Lādin matches himself to) are being attacked or having their land occupied, but the extent to which they are being humiliated and oppressed. The nature of this humiliation and oppression, according to bin Lādin, is the attacking of civilians/non-combatants who have no means to defend themselves—this is the most important element constituting the situation. Put in other terms, the bin Lādin is acting according to norms triggered when other norms and normative rules (here, the attacking of non-combatants and civilians) are broken or ignored. Normative concerns and issues constitute the situation just as much as, if not more, than the material

concerns. ‘Usāmah is not approaching this matter from a viewpoint of maximizing material gains and payoffs; there are deep rooted norms and rules which must be followed when others are violated.

The next excerpt reads:

"We want to study mutually the ways which are possible to follow for setting matters right [lit. returning matters to their beginning] and returning rights to their holders, after what befell the people in the way of oppressive conditions and immense harm for matters of their religion and worldly existence, and it befell the people in the entirety of their groups."

In this, we see bin Lādin identifying the specific issues even further. Importantly, he wants to "set matters right," rather than, say, improve circumstances to a point beyond "normal." The latter would imply the logic of a consequence at work, but the former the logic of appropriateness. He also talks about "returning rights to their holders," specifically bringing up normative issues. Of course, the "worldly existence" (That is, material things. The word he uses here is a semi-religious term denoting life on earth, rather than the hereafter, and is probably used for contrast with the word "religion" before it.) of the people is also important, but here it is not meant to show that he is concerned with it for its own sake, but rather because it is tied to the normative issues at stake. Lastly, "the people in the entirety of their groups" expands his identity to not just Muslims, but Arabs (though probably Saudis here) more generally. He is trying to assume a variety of social identities, and thus why we will observe appeals and justifications not from Islam alone.

"The situation in the land of the two Holy Places became just like a tremendous volcano about to explode [...] and a certain explosion at Riyadh and Khobar⁹ is but harbinger for this surging torrent which was born from suffering, persistent repression, subjugation, oppressive tyranny, degrading injustice, and poverty."

⁸ The source for this text was taken from <http://www.tawhed.ws/r?i=1502092b>. All translations my own unless noted otherwise. I have excluded citing the original Arabic, only providing the translation. I have translated as closely as possible while preserving English idiom.

⁹ A reference to the terrorist attacks in those two Saudi cities in 1996.

The language here indicates again that bin Lādin's motives are rooted in the situation at hand and that his actions are prescribed by some general rule that oppressed peoples should fight back against their oppressors. It is notable that here he does not draw on Islamic rules and laws prescribing these actions, demonstrating that he is matching himself to multiple identities, not just "Muslim" exclusively. It is even clearer here:

"Indeed, our terrorism against you, while you bear arms on our land, is an order, legitimately obligatory by rationally demanded, and it is a legitimate right according to the conventions of all humankind."

He cites "conventions of humankind," adding to his purely Islamic reasons for attacking the Americans and their allies. These appeals can be seen as attempts to evoke some sort of revolutionary spirit, ideal, or perhaps sympathy throughout first world countries. Such an appeal would resonate better than citations and listings of Islamic law among non-Arab and non-Muslim populations. Regardless, it is manifest that he is following rules (defending oneself) in a situation (being attacked or oppressed) for an identity (a human being).

"Verily, the youth regard you as responsible for all of what killing, eviction, and violation of the Muslims' sanctities your brethren, the Jews, undertook in Palestine and Lebanon
[...]
And indeed, the children of Iraq and those of them who have died, more than 600,000 on account of the lack of food and medicine, a consequence of your tyrannical blockade on Iraq and its people, are our children. Indeed, in that, you, with the Saudi regime, bear the blood of these innocents."

The issue of "responsibility" appears here, and this idea is brought up in other statements as well. For the terrorists, the responsibility of the target for certain offenses is an oft-seen issue constituting the situation. There is some norm at work here making it necessary for the offending party to rectify or ameliorate the situation. Were the problems caused by the "responsible" target the extent of the matter, then their elimination by any actor or means would satisfy the terrorists. However, it seems that a specific actor must be the one to deal with it or answer for it. In

addition to the material damages bin Lādin lists, he includes also "violation of the Muslims' sanctities," an immaterial, and thus suggesting normative, damage.

The other significant feature of this excerpt is bin Lādin's identification with the parents of the dead Iraqi children. Including more than just religion, his identity register encompasses pan-Arab nationalism and familial relationships too. Interestingly, while the situation and identity to which he matches himself change radically, the rules for them do not change at all. This hints at basic, fundamental shared characteristics among the identities and situations he includes, the rules for which somehow transcend them. Meaning, he is primarily motivated by broad, overarching norms, and the inclusion of multiple identities and situations are perhaps indicative of the matching process, for in doing so he refines, details, and clarifies those basal characteristics.

Quoting a poem, bin Lādin writes:

"Walls of oppression are not demolished without downpours of bullets.
The free do not surrender leadership to every infidel and sinner.
Disgrace is not wiped off from the forehead without the spilling of blood."

It is unclear whether bin Lādin himself wrote this, or is just quoting an anonymous author, but I have included this, in addition to its content, simply because it *is* a poem. The point is that the elements of the logic of appropriateness, situation (being disgraced), identity (being free), and rules (spilling of blood, not surrendering, and violence) are embodied in a cultural and artistic form of expression, suggesting that he is acting in accordance with predetermined, non-negotiable principles.

Next in line is 'Usāmah's "Message to America," a video released around November 1st, 2004. It is exclusively addressed to America, not including any direct messages for other audiences, like Muslims or Arabs. Therefore, excerpts from it can show what we observed in "Declaration of Jihad" was not a random occurrence, but an accurate representation of a

consistent logic of appropriateness. The second advantage of this text is that it is specifically addressed to Americans. ‘Usāmah would want to make his logic understandable for a foreign audience unfamiliar with the situation and identity he finds himself in and norms he follows. This is precisely why we will see situations and identities which are non-specific to a region or culture. Curiously, bin Lādin's register includes more explicit overtures to a logic of consequence language when he addresses Americans, perhaps reflecting that they better understand or respond to that logic.

In the opening lines, and as before after introducing the message with religious language, bin Lādin says:

“Before I begin, I say to you that security is an indispensable pillar of human life and that free men do not forfeit their security, contrary to Bush's claim that we hate freedom.

[...]

No, we fight because we are free men who don't sleep under oppression. We want to restore freedom to our nation, just as you lay waste to our nation. So shall we lay waste to yours.”¹⁰

‘Usāmah continues his logic from the previous statement regarding identity, situation, and rules. “Free men” (identity) “under oppression” (situation) “fight” (rule). Because he is a free man, he *must* fight, since that is what a free man does; the logic displayed by this language is a logic of appropriateness. In the first part of the excerpt, he expands upon the identity of a “free man,” someone who does not “forfeit his security,” thereby associating a rule or norm with the identity. Of additional note is his appeal to broader notions of human rights when he says that “security is an indispensable pillar of human life.” We may read this as characterizing his most basic identity

¹⁰ The text for this was taken from here: <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/pages/878334a3-f944-47ba-8b4f-f9f4e957fcdd>. I have not translated the Arabic statement, since English subtitles were present on the original video given to Al-Jazeera, (presumably) translated to English by al-Qaeda itself. For this reason, I count the English as being al-Qaeda's own words.

and norms, and also the one with the broadest appeal: a human, and therefore deserving of security.

The sentences about "laying waste" to nations may be seen as a threat or coercion, but considering the normative aspects of bin Lādin's statements, these lines can also express the idea of maintaining an equilibrium and evening of the scales, somewhat akin to revenge. The only to "equalize" the situation is to repay like with like, in this case, destruction with destruction solely. The difference between coercion/threats and revenge/equalizing is that for the former, the damages can come in any form and are meant to change the behavior of the target, but for the latter, the damages *must* come in a certain form and are not intended to change behavior of the target. Or, in other words, the most effective means of changing the target's behavior determines the damages inflicted for coercion/threats, but the type and form of damages already inflicted by the target determines the damages inflicted for revenge/equalizing, which is what bin Lādin seems to be meaning here. Cast in the language of the logic of appropriateness, the situation (having harm and damage inflicted) determines, or constitutes, the course of action (inflict the same damages and harm).

That isn't to say deterrence and changing behavior is not a concern, for he says a few lines down:

“And as I looked at those demolished towers in Lebanon, it entered my mind that we should punish the oppressor in kind and that we should destroy towers in America in order that they taste some of what we tasted and so that they be deterred from killing our women and children.”

Deterrence and changing behavior is still important, as bin Lādin himself states that that is the purpose. However, take note of why he decided to go about it the way he did and the other purpose of 9/11. He wanted to “punish the oppressors *in kind* [emphasis mine],” meaning that the damages were determined by the damage inflicted. More importantly, the other purpose is

having the Americans “taste some of what we tasted.” While ‘Usāmah touches upon the issue of achieving equilibrium, he has also brought up an interesting, and recurring, notion with this, namely that experience is requisite for understanding a situation and course of action. The Americans can understand only once they have experienced the reality. This hearkens back to what March and Olsen stated about the matching process being based on experience. In a few lines previous to this excerpt, bin Lādin said along similar lines:

“I couldn't forget those moving scenes, blood and severed limbs, women and children sprawled everywhere. Houses destroyed along with their occupants and high rises demolished over their residents, rockets raining down on our home without mercy.

The situation was like a crocodile meeting a helpless child, powerless except for his screams. Does the crocodile understand a conversation that doesn't include a weapon?”

The last line is the one of key interest. The “crocodile” [America] can only understand “weapons,” that is, the use of violence, in the view of bin Lādin. Violence, then, is a prerequisite for communication with America, at least about the topic of oppression of weak foreign peoples. Without it, Americans are not even able to listen to and reject the conversation, since they cannot even comprehend it. While this is not strictly related to the logic of appropriateness, I believe this highlights another unrecognized aspect of the violence which may shed light upon other reasons why it is used. We will see other mentions of this in later statements, and I will discuss this topic further in the conclusion.

Returning to the issue of punishment, bin Lādin had said prior to the last two excerpts:

“In those difficult moments [of viewing the effects of the war in Lebanon and Palestine] many hard-to-describe ideas bubbled in my soul, but in the end they produced an intense feeling of rejection of tyranny, and gave birth to a strong resolve to punish the oppressors.”

He says that he had “strong resolve to punish the oppressors,” formed after viewing the atrocities. This would, presumably, be in addition to his other motivations and goals, e.g. helping

out the oppressed peoples. We should take seriously and literally his use of the word “punish,” and by that I mean not interpreting it as a synonym for a threat or coercion, but a obligatory, non-substitutable penalty (in this case, infliction of harm and damages) for a transgressing a norm, which itself is dictated by a norm. In support of this interpretation, he declares that he decided the punishment was necessary based on *past* events; threats or coercion, on the other hand, are meant to influence *future* events. America must be “punished” (attacked) regardless of their future behavior and whether or not this punishment will even affect their future behavior. This does not support the basic logic of consequence, since bin Lādin’s idea of punishment is not strictly, or even mostly, for increasing future payoffs (such as, making it more likely the Americans will leave the Arab nations).

Certainly, he does include language that is in accordance with the logic of consequences and assumptions of the strategic model, but it is juxtaposed to and interspersed with language displaying the logic of appropriateness. For example, he says:

“It is as if [the people killed in the 9/11 attacks] were telling you, the people of America: ‘Hold to account those who have caused us to be killed, and happy is he who learns from others’ mistakes.’

And among that which I read in their gestures is a verse of poetry. ‘Injustice chases its people, and how unhealthy the bed of tyranny.’

As has been said: ‘An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure.’”

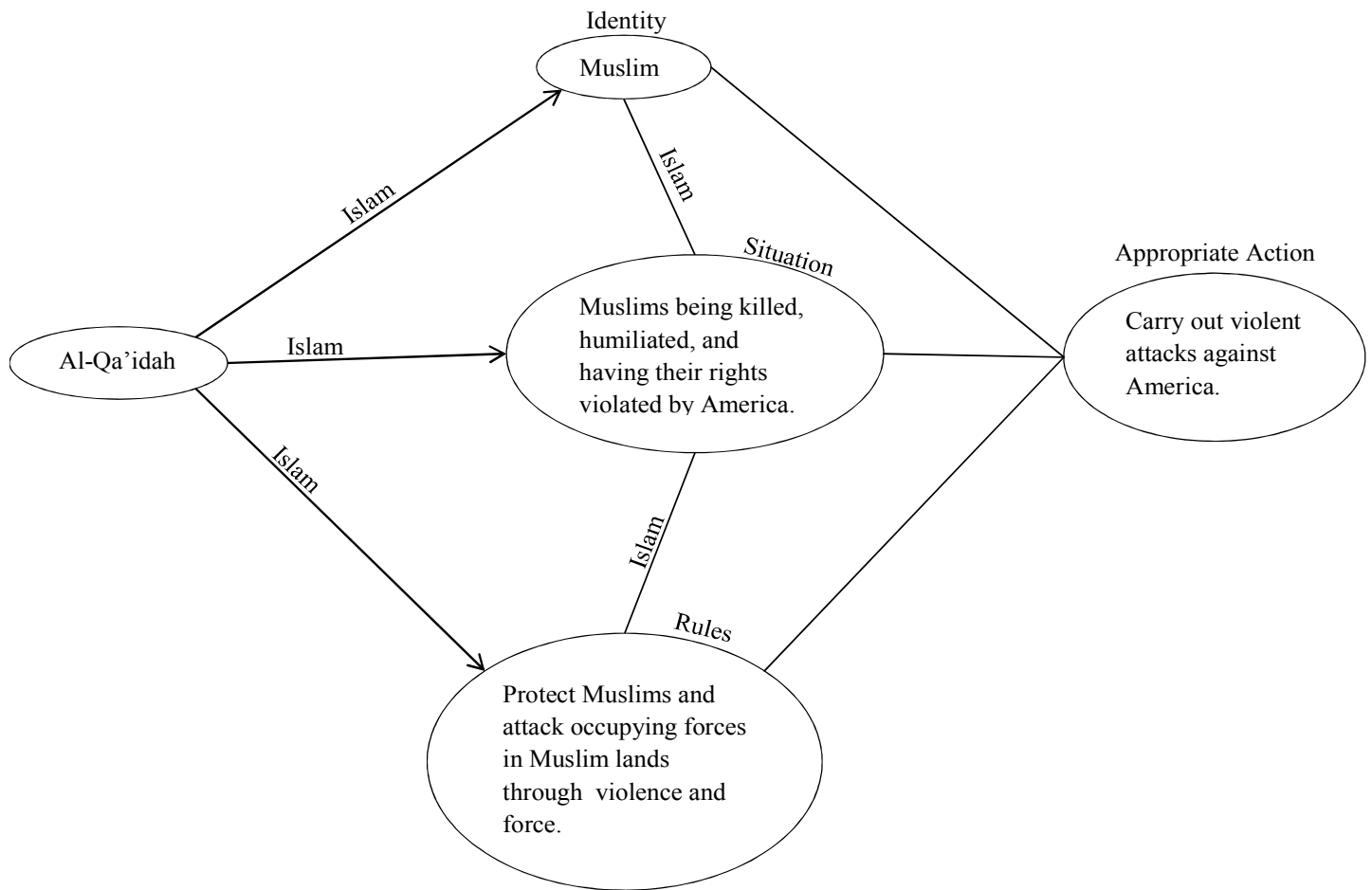
The first and last aphorisms he quotes do suggest that bin Lādin is keeping in mind future consequences and stopping the Americans from occupying Arab lands, but the mere fact that he says them aphoristically, as if they were common sense, suggests that his logic is also based on following norms and rules (here, in the form of aphorisms or common sense). Take note of the second quote, or “verse of poetry,” as well. Unlike the other two, it is far more removed from the language of threats and coercion, instead expressing a normative concept in the form of “poetry” (or perhaps more appropriately, an aphorism). The excerpt above provides a small, but

representative, example of how bin Lādin intertwines and mixes together the logic of appropriateness and logic of consequence, and also the prevalence and predominance of the former over the latter. Focusing on the logic of consequence alone fails to capture the nature of al-Qaeda's motivations and the bases of their goals.

The other appearances of the logic of consequence in bin Lādin's statements, excerpts of which were omitted for the sake of space, are when he discusses the *details* of an attack, such as specific location, targets, time, method, etc., basically everything besides the decision to attack—all of those details are not governed by his logic of appropriateness, unlike the decision itself. To view it another way, the logic of consequences is utilized to calculate the best way to accomplish the course of action determined by the logic of appropriateness, but not determine that course of action by itself. Thus, it can explain why al-Qā'idah used airplanes to destroy the World Trade Centers, but not why al-Qā'idah even attacked the World Trade Centers in the first place.

To explicate the logic of appropriateness of al-Qā'idah, I have created a visual model to summarize what has been stated in words above. I have only elected to include the most salient identity, situation, and rules for the sake of clarity:

Figure 1: al-Qā'idah's Logic of Appropriateness



V. Second Case: Shehzad Tanweer and Mohammed Siddique Khan

Turning now to the statement's issued by Shehzad Tanweer and Mohammed Siddique Khan, we shall that their statements, videos made before they carried out their attacks on the London subways, bear many of the same themes present in the statements issued by 'Usāmah bin Lādin. Namely, the specific focus on how their situation, identity, and norms were pivotal in deciding to use violence. Their violence serves, among other things, to fulfill the requirements of appropriateness demanded by their situation (the killing, humiliation, and oppression of Muslims in other countries), their identity (Muslim), and their normative values/rules. It is not strictly a

tactical decision meant to coerce their targets into changing their behavior. This case also serves to show that the logic of appropriateness can apply to both Western and non-Western terrorists and terrorist groups.

Beginning his statement, Khan says:

“Your democratically elected governments continuously perpetuate atrocities against my people all over the world. And your support of them makes you directly responsible, just as I am directly responsible for protecting and avenging my Muslim brothers and sisters. Until we feel security, you will be our targets. And until you stop the bombing, gassing, imprisonment and torture of my people we will not stop this fight.”¹¹

The motivation for his choice is clearly spelled out here: support for the atrocities (bombing, gassing, imprisonment) committed against “his” people. While he does say he will “protect” them, he also admits to “avenging” them as well, which is not related to any increase in security or protection—it is a normative, or rule-based, action. Note also his emphasis on responsibility, indicating that his actions are, in part, required by duty and morals, which constitute his identity as a “protector.” Though perhaps more obvious that his motivations do not derive from material consequence than the above words are these:

“I and thousands like me are forsaking everything for what we believe. Our driving motivation doesn't come from tangible commodities that this world has to offer.”

He freely admits that his motivation for carrying out the attack does **not** come from “tangible commodities,” i.e. material considerations. Taken with his other words, it is even more clear that his actions are not strictly a measures for achieving a greater payoff—they are drive by his normative beliefs and identity.

There is also evidence in his statement that his situation and identity constitute each other:

¹¹ Khan’s statement taken from here: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4206800.stm

“And our words have no impact upon you, therefore I'm going to talk to you in a language that you understand. Our words are dead until we give them life with our blood.

[...]

We are at war and I am a soldier. Now you too will taste the reality of this situation.”

Starting with the second part, for him, the situation is “war,” and so he is “soldier.” Because he is soldier, he must also “protect” and “avenge” his “people” for the sake of “security.” Moving back to the first portion, the situation as he puts it is one where “words have no impact,” i.e. communication has broken down. From this, he must “talk in a language that [his target] understand[s].” Though this part indicates his more immediate goals rather than basic motivations, I included it because it highlights that the situation, and his implied identity as a communicator, contributed to the actions he took. The rules associated with his identity and situation are his motivations for the attack, not the consequences following them. The fact that he *must* carry out the attack, not the direct consequences themselves, are more important for him.

These lines, in addition to what I noted above, curiously show that his violence is meant to alter his target’s “reality” and to give his “words life with blood.” This is important to point out for three reasons: 1.) it does show that the logic of consequence is at least partially at work, but the payoff, changing reality and giving life to his words with blood, is non-material, 2.) it shows that the violence is not the message itself, but a requirement for the message to be understood, and 3.) it has great similarity to the line in ‘Usāmah’s statement about necessity of violence for communication. However, since the last two points are unrelated to the current discussion, I will return to them later in the conclusion.

Evidence for matching can be found also here in his reference to Islam:

“Our religion is Islam - obedience to the one true God, Allah, and following the footsteps of the final prophet and messenger Muhammad... This is how our ethical stances are dictated.”

and where he said he was “directly responsible [...] for his Muslim brothers and sisters.” In no way do I mean to propose that Islam is responsible for, recommends, or permits terrorism, simply that Khan has used it to match his identity, situation, and norms. Islam, in Khan’s interpretation, provides the structure to link his situation (war, atrocities committed against Muslims) and identity (soldier, Muslim connected to other Muslims) with rules (attack those who are attacking other Muslims). He himself even states that this is where he derives his “ethical stances.”

Moving to Shehzad Tanweer, he states:

“To the non-Muslims of Britain, you may wonder what you have done to deserve this. You are those who have voted in your government, who in turn, and still to this day, continue to oppress our mothers, children, brothers and sisters, from the east to the west, in Palestine, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Chechnya

[...]

Your government has openly supported the genocide of over 150,000 innocent Muslims in Fallujah.

[...]

You will never know peace until our children in Palestine, our mothers and sisters in Kashmir, our brothers in Iraq and Afghanistan know peace.

[...]

[Muslims of Britain,] [f]ight against the oppressors, the oppressive British regime.”¹²

In this, we find the situation (oppression, “genocide,” and lack of peace for other Muslims by Britain) and identity (Muslim deeply connected, shown by attribution of kinship, to other Muslims) to which Tanweer has matched himself. His description of the situation though is more than just oppression, it is also the support for the oppression by British civilians. By construing it that way, the civilians themselves are also responsible. He also states:

¹² This statement was taken from *Leisure Studies: Themes and Perspectives* (Best 2010) and *Cutting the Fuse* (Pape and Feldman 2010).

“[I]f you fail to comply with [our demands], then know that this war will never stop and that we are ready to give our lives for the cause of Islam.

[...]

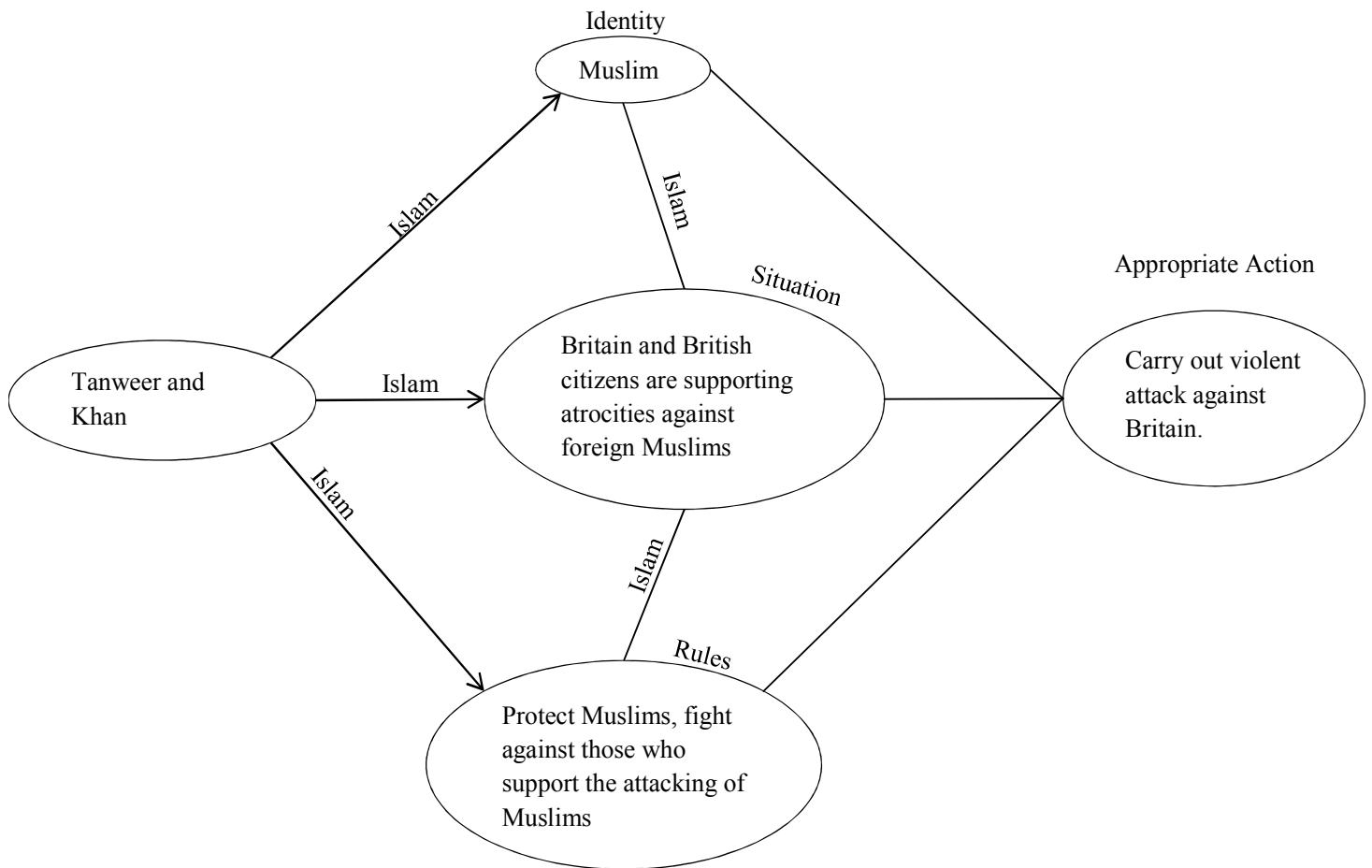
[Muslims of Britain,] [f]ight against the disbelievers, for it is an obligation made on you by Allah.”

In these words, Tanweer specifies his situation further (war) and, with the mention of Islam, suggests the framework which he used to match his situation, identity, and norms. His saying that the “war will never stop” suggests that it is a duty or requirement, indicative more of a norm or a rule than a strategy. This, of course, can also be reasonably construed as coercion, but given the other statements examined and the lack of capability to actually coerce his target, I do not think coercion fits as well as a normative requirement. More conclusively, he states that this is an “obligation” by “Allah,” indicating that his actions are required by the rules and norms he follows.

Pape’s analysis of these same transcripts concludes that these two “were motivated by the goal of ending foreign occupation of kindred communities” (Pape and Feldman 2010, p. 55), but this conclusion is not wholly warranted. The true motivation was the result their having matched an identity to a situation, or rather, the rules necessitated by their situation and identity, i.e. ending the oppression of kindred Muslims. Foreign occupation may have led to the oppression, but it in and of itself did not, since there could be foreign occupation without oppression, and likewise, oppression without foreign occupation—one does not require the other. Construing their motivation as “the goal of ending foreign occupation” entirely misses the point, though as such it does work for Pape’s theory.

I have included a diagram to visually illustrate the model set out above, and again, only the primary identity, situation, and rules are included:

Figure 2: Shehzad Tanweer and Mohammed Siddique Khan's Logic of Appropriateness



VI. Third Case: The Jemaah Islamiyya/Imam Samudra

The JI's, or specifically, one of its leaders', statements compose the next case. This organization, operating in Indonesia, has only one extant major statement, the justification for the Bali bombings by its mastermind, Imam Samudra, and published in a book called *Aku Melawan Teroris* (*I Fight Terrorists*) in Indonesia. I was unable to obtain a full translation of this text, and so I have had to work from an article¹³ which summarizes and analyzes it. The author of the article has his own goals and purposes in both his analysis and translation, preventing me from

accessing its content by itself. On account of this, I consider this only a limited analysis, and the conclusions are only meant to strengthen to the previous two analyses, not to stand by itself. Despite that limitation, the case, in conjunction with the previous one, demonstrates that the logic of appropriateness among terrorists is geographically widespread and not regionally restricted phenomenon.

Samudra first stresses the importance of understanding the concept of *jihad* to understand why he carried out the attacks, one meaning of which is to fight against infidels occupying Muslim lands, or *jihad fii sabiilah*. He lists the stages of *jihad* next. The first is to bear patience under abuse and oppression and pray for the forgiveness of their attackers. When this did not stop, they had permission to fight against them, and the last stage is the obligation to fight, especially when they have seized Muslim lands. According to Samudra, this *jihad* will end when three conditions have been fulfilled:

1. All mankind bear testimony to the unity of God and that Muhammed is his prophet
2. There is no more ingratitude on earth.
3. God's religion prevails over all other religions (p. 1037).

Samudra goes on to say that *jihad* now is a *fardhu ain*, or “personal obligation,” because of all the Muslim lands occupied by foreigners who cannot be repelled by the people living in those lands. All Muslims then are obligated to help (pp. 1036-1037).

After laying out this general framework, he specifies why the Bali bombing was justified. The main target of the bombing was the U.S. and its allies for attacking the helpless and innocent Muslims in Afghanistan, and as a result, war must be waged against them. And, because of the “global scale” of these attacks against Islam, Bali was a legitimate target despite not being against the U.S. itself. As for the civilians killed, he views them as legitimate targets unprotected

¹³ “Imam Samudra’s Justification for Bali Bombing” (Hassan 2007). All page citations in this section, unless otherwise noted, will refer to this article.

by Islam since they are guilty of supporting and paying taxes to the governments committing crimes against Muslims and Islam. Further, he argues that American and its allies have set a precedent of killing civilians by listing a number of instances (e.g. the embargo on Iraq which killed from 600,000 to 1.5 million children) and “it is only fair that Muslims reciprocate accordingly.” The Bali bombing was “a response [...] to [defend] the Muslims’ self-respect” and part of a “*jihad* that must be carried out even though only a small number of Muslims participate in it.” For Samudra, “[t]argeting civilians is [...] a matter of tipping the scale to attain equilibrium—blood with blood, life with life, and civilian with civilian.” He admits “that war is cruel and bloodcurdling, but injustice cannot be allowed to go unpunished.” The aggression of the U.S. and its allies “is crueller than the war being fought by the *mujahidin* and for this reason God makes war against them an obligation so that balance is attained” (pp. 1038-1040).

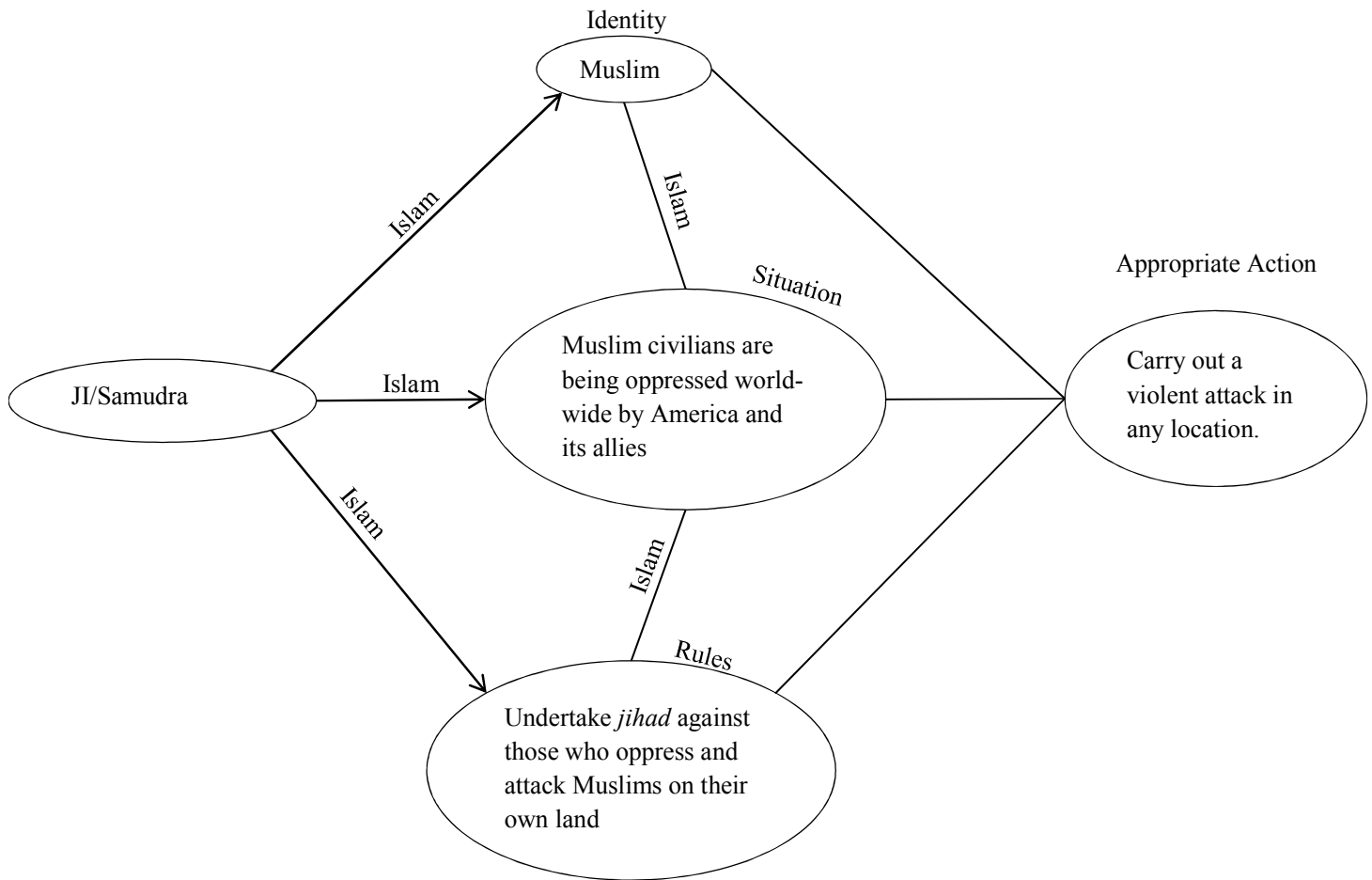
The reason why Samudra chose the Bali night-club specifically rests partially on the logic of consequences and partially on the logic of appropriateness. For instance, the night-club, and surrounding businesses, were places of “vice” and conducted business prohibited by Islam, therefore making them legitimate targets, and the impact on innocent businesses would be minimal. The night-club also provided a “homogenous” target for attack, meaning that the only people who would (or should) visit that place were Americans and their allies. By virtue of this, an attack there would maximize the amount of damage done to the offending nation, thereby making it both more effective (because it maximizes damage) and more appropriate (because it minimizes the amount of innocents harmed). Undoubtedly, I imagine at least, there were other material concerns guiding the JI’s choice of target, such as familiarity with the area, easier access to explosive materials inside Indonesia, knowledge of local language, etc., but Hassan does not

mention if Samudra included these reasons as well (pp. 1040-1041). Regardless, the logic of consequence only guided the specific form the attack took, not the reasoning to attack.

These selections demonstrate that Samudra's situation, identity as a Muslim, and norms were the causes behind the attack, not a large payoff or strategic concerns. The situation, as he sees it, is that Muslims and Islam are being attacked around the world by the U.S. and its allies, and that the civilians of those countries support that. It is not just the attacks themselves, but also injustice, cruelty, and aggression against Muslims. Additionally, he has the three requirements that must be met, which can be thought of as a situation. The rules and norms for this situation are given in his explanation of *jihad* (which, though I did not note, are all supported by quotations from the Qur'an, Muslim scholars, and *hadith*)—all Muslims are obligated to punish and attack the aggressors. His emphasis on attaining equilibrium, obligation, and punishment point to norms, not consequences, motivating his decision to attack. That this *jihad* must be carried out even by a small number of Muslims does not appear to be a strategic choice. Here too Islam provides the structure and framework for Samudra to match his identity, situation, and rules to determine the appropriate course of action, though again I do not mean to implicate Islam in causing terrorism. It provided the link between his rules and norms (*jihad*), identity (Muslim), and situation (occupation of Muslim lands, injustice against Muslims), allowing him to match them together.

Figure 3 below summarizes the JI's/Samudra's logic of appropriateness. Note that this figure does not explain the choice of the Bali nightclub, simply because their logic of appropriateness gave a general model:

Figure 3: The Jemaah Islamiyya's/Imam Samudra's Logic of Appropriateness



VII. Fourth Case: Revolutionary Organization 17 November

For the final case, I will analyze the court testimony of Dimitris Koufodinas, the former leader of the now defunct Greek terrorist group, Revolutionary Organization 17 November (17N). These statements are taken from another analysis, “Urban Guerrilla or Revolutionary Fantastist? Dimitris Koufodinas and the Revolutionary Organization 17 November,” (Kassimeris 2004), whose author translated them from Greek. Despite this factor, many of Koufodinas’s statements have been reproduced in whole, and so the issue of the author’s interpretations and views “leaking through” is less of a concern. However, as I have not looked over the source documents myself, I have available only what the author has thought important, potentially not

including statements of importance to my analysis. Even with these limitations, the words of Dimitris Koufodinas show that the logic of appropriateness occurs in non-Islamic, Western terrorist groups and individuals—it is not exclusive to Islamic ones.

The first evidence that Koufodinas is acting according to normative rules and not consequences is his testimony, saying:

“I won’t do what you would want me to do. I won’t even bother entering your logic. Our morality doesn’t accept logics of cooperation and squealing. [...] This is my stand and will hold on to it until the end, irrespective of any personal cost” (pp. 22-23).

He himself states that he is following a different “logic,” which here is seemingly a logic of appropriateness, given his mention of “morality.” The opposing logic could be either based on the logic of consequences or appropriateness, but there is not enough evidence to say.

Regardless, he is choosing this course of action “irrespective of any personal cost,” so the ultimate material payoff is not a concern, which is vital to the logic of consequence. While this excerpt does not have anything to do with his terrorism per se, it does show that acting according to normative rules is of far greater import for Koufodinas than worrying about costs, hinting that this may affect his violent actions as well.

Kassimeris writes that “Koufodinas believed that 17N and 17N alone continued to represent in Greece a pure and undefiled Marxist-Leninist faith” (p. 23), suggesting that normative values and rules for acting appropriately were based on or derived from a “Marxist-Leninist” ideological framework. In this way, the Marxist-Leninist “faith” would appear to play much the same role for 17N as Islam did for the Muslim terrorists. His identity, from Koufodinas’s statement that 17N “was, as the group had persistently stated from the very beginning, an organization of simple, popular fighters. [...] [I]t came from the guts of the

populace” (ibid.), is that of a “simple fighter” from the “general populace,” calling to mind notions of the proletariat, as well as famous leftist revolutionaries such as Che Guevara.

More information about the identity, rules, and situations can be found in the following excerpts:

“[The] CIA’s station chief was and remains the long hand of American power in our country. Running a 5th column of a few hundred agents positioned in neuralgic posts inside the government, the state bureaucracy, the Army, the political parties and the media, he controls and directs the political, social and economic life of our country in relation to the interests of the USA.

[...]

[T]he revolutionary left, a part of the left which believes that the present-day social system cannot ease the social inequalities simply because it provokes and accentuates them. A system that cannot solve the problem of unemployment simply because it creates unemployment and needs to do so. A system that cannot efface war and conflict simply because it feeds on both. A system that cannot support the equal development of all nations simply because it relies on the unequal treatment and exploitation of the backward, under-developed countries. A system that doesn’t care about the ecological damage that it causes on our planet. And a system that shows no respect to different cultures and different races simply because it obeys the God of money and profit” (pp. 23-24).

He goes on to say that this system “couldn’t be reformed, couldn’t be democratized nor could be humanized: it had to be overthrown through a socialist revolution” (p. 24), that being a revolutionary meant “choosing to fight for the poor, the weak and the exploited” (ibid.), and finally that:

“the left which 17N belonged to was the left of Lenin, Che Guevara and Velouchiotis¹⁴; to the left of the October, Spanish, Chinese and Cuban revolutions; to the left of the anticolonial revolutions in Algeria and Vietnam, the left of May’68 and November’73. To the left of urban guerrilla warfare” (ibid.).

Kassimeris, paraphrasing Koufodinas, remarks that “American imperialism, he added, had brought nothing but chaos and butchery not only in Greece but in most parts of the planet” (pp. 24-25). Kassimeris also asserts that Koufodinas “idolized [Aris Velouchiotis]” and “connect[ed]

¹⁴ Aris Velouchiotis was the communist leader of the Greek People’s Liberation Army (ELAS) during World War II who fought against the occupying Nazis and their Greek supporters.

ELAS's military aims and practices to those of 17N" (p. 25). Constructing the leftist revolutionary identity further, Koufodinas said that

"[the revolutionary] has the obligation, if he is true to himself and to his ideas, to go all the way [...] [His] life choices are actually made against his personal interests [...] [and he] tak[es] part in a struggle against protogenic violence—violence that denies man his inner essence, dehumanizes him and ultimately sinks him into barbarity" (p. 28).

From all this, we can identify with more clarity to what situation, identity, and rules 17N had matched itself too. The situation, similar to the one of al-Qaeda and the JI, is two-fold: American "imperialism" is destroying Greece and controlling its government, and the Greek government itself ("the system") is fatally flawed and broken, ignoring its people and perpetuating social, political, and economic problems. Essentially, the people of Greece are being oppressed by inside forces (the Greek government) and outside ones (the Americans). Its identity is a violent, militaristic "revolutionary left," aligned with other famous revolutionary leaders and movements, especially ELAS and Velouchiotis. 17N, much like al-Qaeda, matched itself to multiple identities (leftist revolutionary, Greek proletariat/"non-elite" citizen) to determine the rules it should follow. The rules for this identity and situation are fighting "for the poor, the weak, and the exploited" and also repairing "the system" only by overthrowing it, for the revolutionary left does not believe it can be restored any other way. In the very last excerpt, notice the necessity Koufodinas imparts on the revolutionary's actions—to be a revolutionary, one *must* "go all the way," even if it is against "his personal interests." He fights against violence which violates human rights (dehumanizes, denies man his inner essence), i.e. normative views.

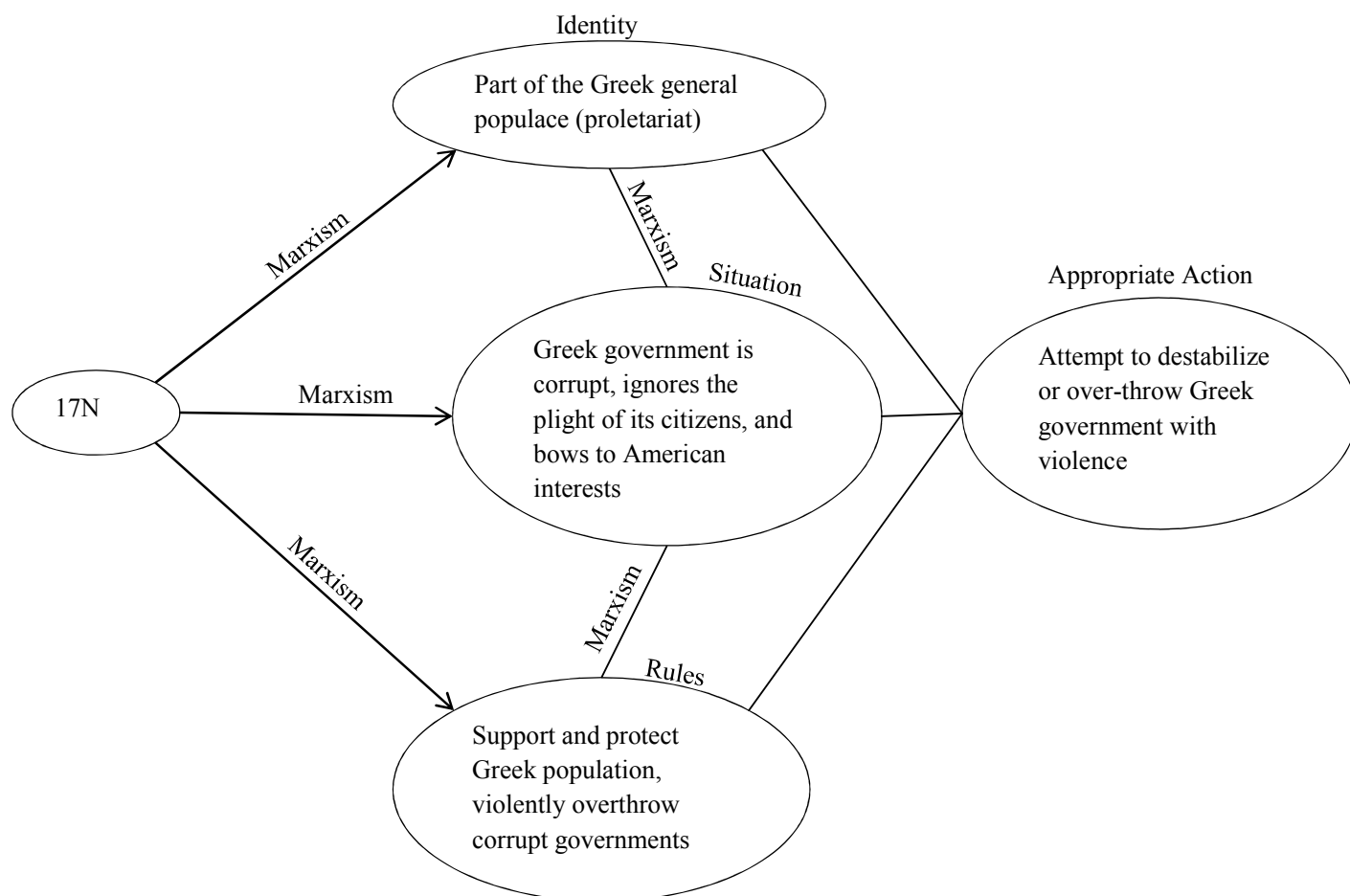
There is still one more crucial part missing: the role Marxism played. It is the crux of 17N's logic of appropriateness, since it functions as a framework for matching together its situation, identity, and rules, as well partially constituting both its identity and rules. It was hinted at with Koufodinas's mentioning of Che Guevara and Lenin, but becomes more apparent

when Kassimeris states “Koufodinas paraphrased from Karl Marx’s *Das Kapital* and *The Communist Manifesto* in order to rationalize 17N’s campaign of violence and argue that according to Marx, violence of that kind was not terrorism” (ibid.). The importance here is not that he defended against charges of terrorism (though that itself suggests he, and 17N, are acting according to different norms), but that he used Marx’s theories to do so. Marxism (and communism more generally) provided the structure to match and connect 17N’s situation, identity, and norms, all while it partially constitutes the group’s identity (communist/Marxist) and rules (violent revolution). In doing both those, it functions much the same as Islam did for the aforementioned Islamic terrorists.

Lastly, I wish to note that the logic of consequence is not wholly absent from Koufodinas’s explanation of 17N’s actions, and still accurately characterizes some of their logic. It is readily evident when he explains how the group went about choosing its targets and which ones it chose. For instance, “17N made no attempts to attack on the heart of the Greek state so there could be no exaggerated polarization” (p. 26) and it chose targets which would “expose and de-legitimate the regime without having any negative political or material consequences for the workers and the mass movement” (p. 27). He also was convinced that “asymmetric guerilla warfare” could provide “many Vietnams [and] could prove the Achilles’ heel of this arrogant hyper armed empire” (p. 25). Future consequences and payoffs did affect 17N’s actions, but only regarding its effectiveness for fulfilling the norms the group matched with. That is, the logic of consequence was relevant only *after* the decision to use violence had been made.

The final figure should illustrate the differences between 17N’s logic of appropriateness and matching framework and those of the Islamic groups:

Figure 4: Revolutionary Organization 17 November's Logic of Appropriateness



VIII. Conclusion

This essay has argued that the logic of appropriateness can characterize parts of terrorist groups' decision making process which the logic of consequences cannot. From the statements examined, I would also argue that the group as a whole uses the logic of appropriateness, not just individual members. The main argument for the future inclusion of the logic of appropriateness, or at the very least research investigating it in greater depth, is also supported by the empirical tests failing to support rational model based theories—terrorists still use violence despite

continued failure.¹⁵ Understanding the role of the logic of appropriateness in determining the use of violence will provide fruitful answers for situations where rationality assumptions fail to generate answers consistent with the data, such as why “terrorists are reflexively perceived as politically incorrigible” (Abrahms 2012, p. 383) by states. Following rules of appropriateness, which do not change with the magnitude of future payoffs, offers theoretically productive assumptions to solve puzzles like this.

Both the logic of consequences and the logic of appropriateness are necessary. Neither is always going to be inherently superior to the other; these assumptions are analogous to tools, and which one is important depends on what the researcher is trying to accomplish. Where the importance of each logic lies relative to the other is unclear as of yet, but, based on the cases, it is after the decision to use violence has been made. Deciding which logic to assume also depends on how specific the rules of the logic of appropriateness are, and so a careful study of those rules will be immensely helpful in choosing the most suitable tools. Future research needs to explore the division of logics with a finer grain to see the effects of low and high rule specificity. Further, the nature of the division itself is in need of description—can low specificity still act as a strict division, high specificity a porous one, or does it even seem like a “division” at all? A better understanding will suggest which logic to use according to what facet of terrorism is being studied (e.g. preparations for attacks, location of attacks, methods used, etc.). In this way, both logics have a place in the study of terrorism, and which one is assumed will depend on the research question.

Communication has long been held to be (one of) the primary purposes of terroristic violence (Schmid and Graaf 1982), but the cases presented complicate this view. It appears that

¹⁵ See “Why Terrorism Does not Work,” Abrahms, Max 2006, “The Political Effectiveness of Terrorism Revisited,” Abrahms, Max 2012

what is being communicated is not a simple issue, not to mention that our concept of communication may not wholly capture terroristic communication. Indeed, “the literature on terrorism suggests that it is a flawed coercive tactic precisely because it is a flawed communication strategy” (ibid., p. 382), and so viewing this communication through the lens of norms may suggest an alternative to coercion. Terrorists stress the normative and humanitarian violations, the transgression of rights, and breaking of what they view as basic rules. Under the logic of consequence, the normative issues and cultural rules are lost underneath their material manifestations, e.g. foreign occupation of territory. Conclusions which best grasp the material aspect, such as coercion, are then given greater visibility and privilege. A thorough understanding of the logic terrorists follow can solve the coercion conundrum by unearthing what exactly terrorists expect from the reception of their communication and if this communication itself is actually normative, not strategic/coercive.

The normative dimensions added by the logic of appropriateness can provide a link between terrorist groups and peaceful ones trying to accomplish the same goals. If such a connection exists, a direct comparison makes possible compelling theories for explaining the choice of political violence among different groups by examining differences in their situation, identity, and rules. Some research has already suggested terrorist organizations are similar to transnational advocacy organizations (Asal et al., 2007) building off the work of Finnemore and Sikkink (1999), but unfortunately research along these lines has not progressed. A focus on the appropriateness-based logic of terrorism may lead to more general theories of social movements by providing grounds for a relationship between peaceful and violent ones, hopefully also showing how to prevent groups from becoming violent.

Lastly, the logic of appropriateness terrorism hold great promise for policy makers and future policy dealing with terrorism. Of particular interest for this purpose would be research on how situation relates to identity and rules to produce terrorism, since the situation is the most likely dimension policy can directly and immediately influence. Given that meanings for identity, situation, and rules are common among a larger population, minimally altering a situation or how it is perceived so that terrorism becomes highly unlikely or impossible to arise might be hugely more effective than current counter-terrorist measures which focus on individuals and groups; the larger scale might be able to save resources while covering exponentially more individuals than current methods.

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